Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1689 with a release date of Friday, December 25th 2009 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. Congress may force the FCC to have engineers as advisors to the Commissioners, the Emergency Communications Enhancement act gets a nod from the U-S Senate, a power company is told to turn off part of its system due to alleged interference to aircraft, hams worldwide welcome the XW-1 ham-sat to the airwaves and a visit with an all grown up Veronica Harrington, KC6TQR. All this and more an our Christmas week Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1689 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RADIO LAW: CONGRESS TO CONSIDER PUTTING STAFF ENGINEERS BACK AT FCC

Engineers may soon be advising FCC Commissioners if the United States Congress has its way. Amateur Radio Newsline's Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, reports:

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United States Senator Olympia Snowe, of Maine, has introduced a bill that would potentially add one electrical engineer or computer scientist to the staffs of each commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission. Known as S. 2881, the bi-partisan measure co-sponsored by Senator. Mark Warner of Virginia would create the new position of Staff Engineer and would require that the person have a degree in electrical engineering or be a computer scientist.

According to the Society of Broadcast Engineers, if eventually passed into law the new authorization would effectively undo a loosening of requirements for technical staff at the highest level of the FCC that began more than 25 years ago. SBE President Vinny Lopez said the bill will go a long way toward returning technical expertise to the FCC commissioners' offices.

This creation of the mandatory Staff Engineer would be an additional position. The bill does not seek to replace any of the current three authorized staff assistants in each commissioner's office. The Society of Broadcast Engineers says that it will seek to get a companion bill introduced in the House.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, in Los Angeles.

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The previous attempt to add technical expertise to the FCC commissioner's offices took place way back in 1991. That's when Representative Don Ritter introduced HR. 3501, which would have required that at least one member of the commission be skilled in the engineering sciences. It went down to defeat. (RW)

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RADIO LAW: AR EMCOMM ENHANCEMENT ACT GETS SENATE NOD

The Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Enhancement Act of 2009 has been passed the Senate by unanimous consent and now goes to the House of Representatives.

S 1755 was cosponsored by Senators Joe Lieberman of Connecticut and Susan Collins of Maine. The measure if passed and signed into law would direct the Department of Homeland Security to undertake a study on emergency communications and the role played by radio amateurs.

S 1755 points out that there is a strong Federal interest in the effective performance of Amateur Radio Service stations. As such that performance must be given support at all levels of government; and protection against unreasonable regulation and impediments.

More on this bill is on-line at the ARRL Website at www.arrl.org/news/stories/2009/12/15/11247/?nc=1   (ARRL)

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RESCUE RADIO: VK HAMS COMMEMORATE RECOVERY FROM BRUSHFIRE

Australia's Yarra Valley Amateur Radio Group will be setting up a field station with the call VI3KIAH at Kinglake. This in commemoration of the work done by hams at the Black Saturday bush fires. Kinglake was one of the worst affected areas in the Australian 2009 fire season. Jim Linton VK3PC picks up the story from here:

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This commemorative operation is using a callsign that has the suffix KIAH. Thats an Australian Aboriginal word meaning 'beautiful place' or 'from a beautiful place'.

The purpose of the amateur radio activity is to acknowledge the efforts of all who fought and were involved the Black Saturday fires on the 7th of February this year, and the services provided by radio amateurs.

VI3KIAH will be at the Frank Thompson Reserve Kinglake 2pm to 8pm local time on Sunday the 7th of February.

It's first 173 contacts will qualify for a "From the Black" QSL card the significance of 173 is that number of people died in the disaster.

On the day VI3KIAH will be operating both VHF and HF from the club's new emergency communications caravan that has replaced the vehicle destroyed by fire at Healesville.

The Yarra Valley Amateur Group invites those who were involved in the Black Saturday disaster and others to visit the station at Kinglake and to look for it on air.

Well done to the group for its planning of this respectful commemorative

activity to occur on a day when all Victorians are asked to pause for a minute's silence for the first anniversary of the Black Saturday bushfire disaster.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Jim Linton, VK3PC.

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No doubt that the world of amateur radio will be listening on February 7th for the callsign VI3KIAH. (VK3PC)

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RESTRUCTURING: CEPT SURVEYS MEMBERS ON UNIVERSAL LICENSE EXPANSION

Meantime, across the Atlantic pond the CEPT Electronic Communications Committee Working Group RA2, which deals with Radio Amateur issues, has published the results of a questionnaire. This, on the procedure for a country joining CEPT Recommendations.

The survey sought the views of CEPT member administrations on the appropriate procedure for a country to join in using these CEPT Recommendations in relation to an acceptable universal Amateur Radio license and on a harmonized or universally accepted Amateur Radio Examination Certificate. It also sought input on the need for public consultation in case of amendment of national information in the relevant annexes to these recommendations.

For those not aware, CEPT is an acronym that stands for the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications. The actual name comes from the French pronunciation of the group which is the Confï¿½rence europï¿½enne des administrations des postes et des tï¿½lï¿½communications.

CEPT was established on June 26, 1959 as a coordinating body for European state telecommunications and postal organizations. The results of the survey are on line at www.ero.dk. (Southgate)

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RADIO LAW: OFCOM GRANTS EXTENSION TO 500 kHz UK STA

United Kingdom hams involved in 500kHz experimentation have had their license Notices of Validity extended to 2012. This to permit the continued evaluation of that band.

On Wednesday December 16th, UK telecommunications regulator Ofcom announced that following requests made by the Radio Society of Great Britain, the period of validity for all 501 to 504 kHz Notices of Validity is to be extended. This, follows negotiations with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency which lead Ofcom to extending the validity period to February 29, 2012.

The Notices of Validity, which are the UK equivalent of the FCC's granting of a Special Temporary Authority, were originally planned to expire at the end of February 2010. (RSGB)

**

BREAK 1

This week coming to you from warm and sunny Auckland, New Zealand, where its mid-summer, we are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the W9DUP repeater serving DuPage Illinois.

(5 sec pause here)

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THE BPL WAR: UK MAGAZINE VS. BPL/PLT

A United Kingdom consumer electronics magazine has taken on the Broadband over Powerline interference issue.

Author Mike Richards, G4WNC, visited the recent E-M-C U-K trade show and found that powerline telecommunications and the problems they are causing were the hot topics there. His report can be read on pages 32 through 35 of the January issue of Radio User magazine.

The article suggests that if readers think they are suffering from interference then they should complain to telecommunications regulator Ofcom. It also explains how to properly address the issue with Ofcom and refers readers to the United Kingdom radio interference website at www.ukqrm.org

(Radio User Magazine: http://www.radiouser.co.uk/) (GB2RS)

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ENFORCEMENT: POWER COMPANY TOLD TO TURN OFF INTERFERENCE IN AIR BAND

Its not BPL this time, but Duke Energy, which is an electric utility serving North Carolina, has been ordered to cease operating a small portion of its power grid. This, because of its inability to remedy RFI on 111.7 MHz. that the FCC deems to be a hazard to flight safety. Frank Haas, KB4T has more in this report:

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The story goes this way. In response to a complaint of interference, on November 25th an agent of the FCC's Norfolk Office inspected power line facilities belonging to Duke Energy located near the Falls Lake Reservoir in Durham and Wake Counties, North Carolina. During the examination the agent observed the facilities radiating energy on frequencies including 111.7MHz. This FCC says this caused harmful interference to air navigation aids used by pilots flying into nearby Raleigh-Durham International airport.

Later the same day, the agent notified the call center for Duke Energy of the harmful interference and of the need to cease operations at the affected locations. The call center supervisor stated someone would

contact the agent about the interference in a few days. So the FCC waited the few days but as of December 2nd Duke Energy has not contacted the FCC about the interference or notified it that operations had been turned off at the affected locality.

So on December 3rd the FCC got tough. It notified Duke Energy that operation of the power-line facilities was causing interference in violation of Section 15.5(b) of the Commission Rules. It directed Duke Energy to cease operations at the affected locations immediately and keep that part of the grid shut down until repairs had been made. It also told Duke that failure to comply could subject the company to additional enforcement action against it.

According to the regulatory agency violations of the Communications Act or the FCC Rules could subject the violator to substantial monetary forfeitures, or seizure of equipment. It could also lead to criminal sanctions, including imprisonment.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Frank Haas, KB4T, in Holly Hill, Florida, reporting.

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At airtime its not yet known if Duke Energy has complied with the FCC directive to take down its power grid in the geographic area where the interference to aviation communications has been taking place. The complete text of the Official Citation is on line at http://www.fcc.gov/eb/FieldNotices/2003/DOC-295187A1.html (FCC, CGC)

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RADIO LAW: LPFM EXPANSION GETS CONGRESSIONAL BOOST

A measure to permit the FCC to create more Low Power FM broadcast stations has begun its trek through the United States Congress. By a voice vote on December 18th the House of Representatives passed a bill to drop third-adjacent channel protections for most full-power FM broadcasters in order to fit more low-power FM's on the band.

House Commerce Committee Chairman Henry Waxman, of California says that HR 1147, the Local Community Radio Act, removes a statutory barrier to the creation of potentially thousands of new low power stations. The bill now moves to the Senate, where so far no action is yet scheduled. (RW)

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RADIO LAW: SENATOR FEINGOLD WANTS RADIO MARTI TO GO QRT

Senator Russ Feingold's "Spotlight on Spending" series has taken aim at Radio and TV Marti. Feingold, a member of the Senate Budget Committee calls Radio and TV Martï¿½ are a relic of Cold War attempts to broadcast radio and TV signals into Cuba that virtually no one tunes in to anymore.

According to Feingold, government studies show that Radio and TV

Martï¿½ are riddled with problems, and fall short of journalistic standards. He also says that as the United States progresses toward a more modern and constructive relationship with Cuba, that Radio and TV Martï¿½ no longer have any real diplomatic or fiscal purpose.

Backing him up is a January 2009 report by the Government Accountability Office. It found that Radio and TV Martï¿½ broadcasts continue to face jamming by the Cuban government. According to the GAO, the best available research suggests that the audience for Radio and TV Martï¿½ is small, and its effectiveness uncertain. (Source: Media Network, Press Release by Senator Russ Feingold)

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HAM RADIO JOB: ARRL NEEDS EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE MANAGER

The ARRL is looking for an Emergency Preparedness and Response Manager. The Primary Objective of this headquarters staff position is to develop and maintain ARRL's emergency communications and emergency preparedness functions, both internally and externally. To apply, please e-mail your resume to Monique Levesque at ARRL headquarters at mlevesque (at) arrl (dot) org. (ARRL)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: DAYTON HAMVENTION TO STAY AT HARA THROUGH 2013

The Dayton Hamvention will be staying at its home at the Hara Arena at least another three years. According to planners the Hamvention Committee has inked a deal with the Hara covering 2011, 2012 and 2013 in addition to the one already in place for 2010. The planning committee has also reached an agreement with the close in Salem Mall for parking and with the local bus service for transportation to and from the mall parking site. Hamvention 2010 is slated for May 14th to the 16th which is less than 6 months away. (DARA)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: ZS2LAW TO MANAGE HERMANUS MAGNETIC OBSERVATORY

Some names in the news. Dr. Lee-Anne McKinnell, ZS2LAW, has been appointed as acting Managing Director of South Africa's Hermanus Magnetic Observatory. This during the absence of Sandile Malinga who has been appointed by the Minister of Science and Technology to serve as caretaker Chief Executive Officer of the South African Space Agency for a period of 18 months beginning January 1st, 2010.

Dr. McKinnell is well known for her participation in the South African Radio League's Radio Technology in Action program where she has made many presentations over the past three years. Despite her busy schedule, will again be joining the program in 2010.

The Hermanus Magnetic Observatory is a South African research facility of the National Research Foundation which is an autonomous science council responsible for research and human resources development in South Africa More about it is on-line at /www.nrf.ac.za. (NZART)

**

NAMES IN THE NEWS: A MONEY HUNT BY AN HONORABLE HAM

And a ham radio operator working a tow vehicle driver is a big hero to one of his clientele. This as Craig Goldbeck, N9ETD, and his father Gerald recover missing money for a local business.

The two were calling on customers of their Goldbeck Towing business in Onalaska, Wisconsin, when they noticed something strange on Highway 16. That something was money.

According to the La Crosse Tribune, earlier in the day an employee of an area business had driven off with a bank bag containing $3,000 on the vehicle's hood. It broke free and scattered its contents across the landscape.

The men started picking up $20 bills, some of them in stacks of four or five. They then called police and an officer joined the money hunt. In all the trio recovered $2,860 that was returned to its rightful owner.

The Goldbecks' were rewarded for their honesty and sharp eyes. The business owner sent them a box of steaks. (lacrossetribune.com, KC9ECI)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. This week coming to you from Auckland, New Zealand where we celebrate Christmas on the beach, we are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: TERRESTRIAL AMATEURS WELCOME THE XW-1 HAMSAT

Amateur satellite operators worldwide have reported receiving strong signals on the telemetry beacon of China's XW-1 satellite that was launched on December 15th. The satellite is currently being commissioned but all three amateur radio modes, which include an VHF to UHF FM repeater, a VHF to UHF linear transponder and a crossband AFSK packet system have been tested and appear to be operating to their design specification. Also strong is its Morse beacon on 435.7900 MHz.

During the checkout Michael Chen, BD5RV/4 reported that he managed to operate the special event station BT3WX to work several E2, BY, VR2, XX9 stations throughout on an evening pass using the FM transponder. AFSK packet operations were active over Japan with JA0CAW receiving the downlink on 435.675 MHz at 1200bps. As to the linear transponder? It was also busy with JE1CVL, JH1EKH, BD4SY, JF2CTY, JH1BCL, JA5BLZ succeeded in a QSO over Japan.

The first activation of the XW-1 linear transponder over North America took place in the early hours of December 20th and Drew Glasbrenner, KO4MA, produced a spectragram of the event showing the 50 kHz passband full of SSB signals. KO4MA says that right after XW-1 came on he called CQ and was answered by K8YSE. After moving up in the passband he worked W4DFU at the University of Florida followed by HK4MKE in Columbia.

An XW-1 CW Telemetry Decoder by Mike Rupprecht, DK3WN, can be downloaded at www.dk3wn.info/software.shtml (ANS)

**
HAM RADIO IN SPACE: XW1 NOW HO-68

And this just in. AMSAT-NA OSCAR Number Coordinator Bill Tynan, W3XO, has informed Alan Kung, BA1DU, Amateur Satellite Project Manager and Chief Executive Officer of AMSAT-China that XW-1 is now designated as Hope OSCAR 68, or HO-68. More can be found on-line on the AMSAT-China web page at www.camsat.cn. (W3XO)

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RADIO NEAR SPACE: UK BALLOON LAUNCH

Monday December 14th saw the launch of Pegasus High Altitude Balloon from Cambridge in the UK.

Because of restrictions imposed by the UK Amateur Radio license it was not possible to use an amateur transmitter on the balloon, so instead a GSM cell-phone was fitted along with a License Exempt 434.075 MHz 10 milliwatt transmitter running 50-baud RTTY.

While the GSM phone doesn't work above about 3000 feet it is extremely reliable once the payload has landed while the License Exempt transmitter allowed the payload to be tracked throughout the flight.

Further information on the project is at www.pegasushabproject.org.uk (Pegasus Project)

**

RADIO IN SPORTS: NEW RADIO TECHNIQUE AIDS TRAINING COMPETITION SKIIERS

Tiny radio transmitters on skis are helping competitive skiers analyze their technique. These units can be attached to an athlete's skis and transmit through small antennas located to the front and the back of the skis.

Receiving stations placed alongside a slope in regular intervals pick up the signals and analyze the time a signal needs to travel from the antenna to a station, thus accurately determining an antenna's position within three centimeters. A computer attached to the receiver calculates the position of the skis every millisecond and displays their exact path on a monitor.

The Austrian firm Abatec developed the system. It says that its

adaptable to just about any sport that requires a close study of athlete performance and event timing. (Science OnLine)

**

DX SURVEY: CHOOSING THE TOP DXPEDITIONS OF 2009

The 'DX World of Ham Radio' web page is conducting a online survey to see which expedition warrants the title DXpedition of the Year 2009. Special engraved trophies will be shipped to the top three. To participate in the survey, go to http://dx-hamspirit.com. (Ham Spirit)

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DX

In DX, word that UT6UE and UT6UF are on board a ship headed to the Ukrainian Antarctic Research Centre's Vernadsky Base. They have with them a Yaesu H-F transceiver, an antenna tuner and a folded dipole for 80, 40 and 20 meters. They hope to be active on 80, 40 and 20 meters between 2200 and 0100 UTC. They have already been reported on the Packet-Clusters signing UT6UE/MM. QSL as directed on the air.

W2CG will be active as either P40C or P40CG from Aruba from the 5th to the 26th of January 2010 primarily CW and RTTY on 80 through 6 metres. Listen out for him between 1200 to 1400 and 2000 to 2400 UTC. QSL via W2CG, direct or bureau.

The Hellenic Amateur Radio Association of Australia will be active as VI2BI from Broughton Island on February 5th, 6th and 7th. The team plans to operate CW, SSB and RTTY on 160 through 6 meters. QSL direct to VK2CL.

JQ1LCW is now active from Mauritania as 5T5YL. Recent reports say she has been heard on 17 meter SSB working mainly Europe and East Coast North American stations. QSL via JQ1LCW.

Lastly, VE6LB says via the Ohio Penn DX Newsletter that he will be active portable A6 from Dubai between January 8th and February 8th. His operation will be holiday style with low power using wire antennas mainly on 40 through 15 meters CW. QSL direct via his home callsign or Logbook to the World.

(Above from various DX news sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO VERONICA HARRINGTON, KC6TQR

And finally this week, a question. A rhetorical one that asks whatever happened to Veronica Harrington, KC6TQR? You know, the cute little 6 year old ham from Long Beach, California. The one who captivated the nation with her appearance demonstrating ham radio on the Late Night with David Letterman program back in March of 1992.

Well the truth be known, Veronica is still a ham but she is now all

grown up, married and out in the business world. The Rain Report's Hap Holly, KC9RP, recently had a long chat with Veronica and she told him what has happened in her life over the past 17 years:

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KC6TQR: "Throughout my life I have done a lot. When I was 8 I actually got my FCC Commercial License. When I was 11 I got my Parliamentarian License and I became an E.M.T. when I was 18 while out volunteering with the Sheriff's license out here in Los Angeles.

"Professionally I do investment banking.

"I like going to Disneyland.

"I really like exploring the area. I actually live in downtown Los Angeles and love all the old architecture down here. There are so many things to discover."

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That's just a small sample of the Veronica Harrington Myers, KC6TQR, story. To hear more just tune into this weeks RAIN Report. You will find it on-line at www.therainreport.com or on your telephone at 773-358-7845. (RAIN)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's WIA News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), 28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita California, 91350

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Meachen, ZL2BHF, and the entire world-wide all volunteer Amateur Radio Newsline team wishing you a very Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year, 73 and we thank you for listening.

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